

orations on this occasion, and yet reflecting honor on the land of his birth—alluding, moreover, to the high position even then occupied by the nation, and the future greatness which he predicted, from its laws, its institutions, and peculiar form of government, awaited it—that Maria Heywood could not fail to experience a secret pride in the warm, and evidently sincere acclamation of the little party present, attesting as they did, their estimate of the worth of him, who in another hour, would be her own for life.

As Ronayne descending from the tribune, passed to the other side of the room, he looked out of the door which had been left open, not more on account of the heat, than to afford the men and their families an opportunity of hearing the discourse thus delivered—almost the first person who came under his glance was Waunagee, for whose admission he had given orders to the serjeant of the guard, and who now, in compliance with his pressing entreaty, had attended. He was becomingly dressed in deer skin, richly embroidered, pliant and of a clear brown that harmonized well with the snowy whiteness of his linen shirt, which was fastened with silver brooches, while on the equally decorated leggins, he wore around the ankle, strings of minute brass bells. On his head floated the rich plumage of various rare birds, but no paint was visible beyond the slightest tint of vermilion on the very top of each cheek-bone, rendering even more striking the expression of his soft dark eyes.

Beckoning to him, Ronayne drew the young Indian within the door, which had he not accidentally distinguished him in the crowd, he was quite too modest to enter alone. Then drawing his arm through his own, he led him, coloring and embarrassed at the novelty of the scene, to the place where Captain Headley was still lingering with his charge. The moment they were near enough, the latter held out her hand to Waunagee, and with all the warmth of her generous nature, pressed that which he extended. The young Indian colored more deeply even than before—his hand trembled in hers—and the look of thankfulness which he bent upon her, in return for this unmistakable confidence, had all the touching melancholy of expression which she had remarked in them at their first meeting. Again a mingled sentiment of confusion and distrust suffused the cheek, and for a moment oppressed the spirit of Maria Heywood in despite of herself, and she almost wished Waunagee had not returned. The thought, however, was momentary. She felt the folly, the injustice of her feelings, and anxious to atone for them, she nervously—almost convulsively grasped the hand of the Indian, carried it to her lips, and said in her full, sweet and earnest tones, that he must ever be her brother as she would ever be his sister.

“And now,” said Captain Headley to the young officer, “what reward do you expect for your maiden oration? What shall it be, Miss Heywood?”

“I will spare her the trouble of an answer,” interposed Ronayne, as he took the arm which had just disengaged itself from that of the commandant, and placed it within his own, “until you have set your seal to the priceless gift,” and his eyes looked all the intensity of his feeling; “I part not with it again.”

“Every thing is ready in the next room,” answered Captain Headley—“go in. When I have announced that the ceremony is about to take place, I shall hasten to give you the dear girl for life,” and imprinting a kiss upon her brow, he passed on to those who were paying their homage to the punch-bowl, and discussing the merits of the oration just delivered.

It was with a flushed cheek, and a beating heart that Maria Heywood was led by Ronayne, radiant with hope and joy, to the little table covered with plain, white linen, and illuminated by half a dozen tall candles, behind which the commanding officer had placed himself on an elevated estrade.

All of the guests were grouped around, a little in the rear, while Lieutenant Elmsley stood on the right hand of his friend, and his wife on the left of the betrothed. Next to her, in an arm chair, which, provided with rollers, was easily moved, Mrs. Heywood—and with her beautiful arms reposing on the high back of this, stood Mrs. Headley in graceful attitude, watching the